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ABSTRACT

Many career education programs have been criticized because they concentrate on dispensing information instead of developing competencies. Part of this weakness can be traced to the absence of a rationale derived from the body of literature and research and supported by a knowledge of child growth and development. This project was designed to show how knowledge of career development theory and research could be applied to a functional and logically consistent curriculum framework. A suggested outline for career development in Grades 1-8 is presented, which includes: (1) Awareness State: Grades 1-3, (2) Accommodation State: Grades 4-6, and (3) Exploration State: Grades 7-8. Each individual is seen progressing through a number of vocational stages beginning with the formation stage and extending through the translation-implementation stage. (Author/GEB)

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A CURRICULUM MODEL FOR FACILITATING CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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PREFACE

American public education is becoming increasingly cognizant of the relevance of education for employment. The Advisory Council on Vocational Education recognized that education is the crucial element in preparation for a successful working career at any occupational level. If education is preparation for life, and if practically everyone's life and opportunities for self-expression and self-fulfillment include work, then only the successfully employable are successfully educated. The world of work and the problems of preparation for it, access to it, and successful performance in it are becoming increasingly complex. Out of the changing social and economic environment of the past two decades, however, has emerged clearer concepts of career development which can be translated into operational guidelines to assist in educational program development. The project which follows is designed to be one approach for applying knowledge of career development theory and research to the design of a functional and logically consistent curriculum framework.

L.J.B.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
Theory and Rationale	1
The Timing of Career Activities	5
Purpose of the Study	6
Assumptions	7
Definition of Terms	8
Procedure	10
Method	14
Implementing the Curriculum Model	17
Summary	22
REFERENCES	24

A CURRICULUM MODEL FOR FACILITATING CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Recent years have witnessed an increased interest in implementing programs variously described as The World of Work, Occupational Information, Careers, etc. A comprehensive survey of such programs has been completed by Bailey (1970). With few exceptions, however, these programs fall far short of facilitating the type of behavior they seek to develop. An almost universal weakness of the programs is that they emphasize vicarious experiences rather than direct; they are static rather than dynamic. Hunt (1970) criticizes traditional career programs because they focus on telling children about the world of work rather than providing them the opportunities to engage in it. Thus the programs concentrate on "dispensing information" instead of "developing competencies." Their weaknesses may be traced, in part, to the absence of a rationale derived from the body of literature and research on career development and supported by a knowledge of child growth and development.

Theory and Rationale

Since the beginning of the modern era of career guidance in the early fifties, the body of literature and research related to vocational behavior has multiplied exponentially.

The search for unifying constructs and principles of vocational behavior has been accompanied by a surge in the area of theory building. The present status of career development theory has received extensive treatment in many recent publications. Osipow's Theories of Career Development (1968), Kroll, Dinklage, Lee, Morley, and Wilson's Career Development: Growth and Crisis (1970), Zaccaria's Theories of Occupational Choice and Vocational Development (1970), and collections of readings by Roth, Hershenson, and Hillard (1970) and Zytowski (1968) are current examples.

As theoretical orientations and models of career development have come to be better understood, researchers and practioners have sought to validate theory and implement career guidance practices derived from theory. The most up-to-date review and synthesis of research on vocational behavior is Crites's book entitled Vocational Psychology (1969). Additional closely related reviews have been completed by Perrone (1966), Tennyson (1968), and Holland and Whitney (1969).

Clearly, no shortage of concepts and principles for career development exists. However, if a hard criterion is used, that is, replicated studies whose results have been proven in the field over a period of years, then one would have to conclude that very little, which is systematic in nature, is really known about career development (Osipow, 1969).

Herr (1970) points out, however, that while no one approach yields the comprehensiveness of explanation one might wish, collectively there exists a conceptual frame

of reference which views vocational development and decision-making through the lenses of many disciplines. There is emerging a set of constructs and propositions, some tested and some not, which serve to explain differential decision behavior and trends in the vocational aspects of development. Using a realistic criterion, certain heuristic statements can be made regarding the nature of career development:

1. Career development is considered to be one aspect of the individual's total development. It is most profitably viewed as longitudinal in nature and based on principles of developmental psychology. Vocational behavior develops over time through processes of growth and learning.
2. The theories of career development acknowledge a wide range of factors which determine or at least influence the process of human development (Zaccaria, 1970). Career development is integrated to the total fabric of personality development and is the result of the synthesis of many personal, social, and vocational factors as one matures (Herr, 1970).
3. The unfolding of an individual's career development beginning in early childhood is seen as relatively continuous and long term, but divided into stages or life periods for purposes of description and presentation (Zaccaria, 1970).

4. Each vocational life stage involves meeting and learning to cope with critical developmental tasks. Many of these developmental tasks center on the acquisition of coping mechanisms and mastery behavior which subsume career related choices and adjustments. The choices which an individual makes and the manner in which he enacts the resultant roles form a life sequence known as his career pattern (Ashcraft, 1966).
5. Vocational behavior and career selection develop from less effective behavior and unrealistic or fantasy choice to more complex behavior and more realistic choosing. Career selection becomes increasingly reality-oriented and more realistic as one moves toward the choice itself (Herr, 1970).
6. An individual's striving to arrive at an appropriate vocational goal may be interpreted as a search for a work role that is harmonious with the need structures resulting from the gratification and frustration of early life, as a search for the new ego identity that marks the adolescent stage, or as an attempt to implement an already emerging self-concept (Ashcraft, 1966).
7. Vocational development theories support the existence and causal role of inner, tensional states, which depending on the focus of the theory, are variously described as interests, needs, values, personality characteristics, or life styles (Zytowski, 1965).

The Timing of Career Activities

The research and commentary on career development indicates, beyond any reasonable doubt, that systematic career planning must begin at the elementary school level. Elementary age youth need the opportunity to continuously and systematically explore, from an internal frame of reference, their values, attitudes, and interests in relation to the wide range of educational and career opportunities which may be available to them so that they will avoid premature educational and occupational foreclosure (Gysbers, 1969).

The kindergarten to sixth grade level is the most reasonable place to begin examining the career development process. Children show an interest in the world of work at a remarkably early age. Even before their explicit interest in the world of work, children are exposed to events which shape aspects of their personal development related to work (Osipow, 1969).

Herr (1969, 1970) also concurrs that intervention in career development must begin during the first decade of life. This is the nursery of human nature and the time when the attitudes are formed which later become manifest in vocational commitment or rejection. Youngsters in elementary schools must be exposed to experiences which are meaningful in terms of their individual characteristics and to information which is accurate if they are not to carry residuals of exaggeration and overromanticized occupational stereotypes into later decision-processing.

The timing for prevocational orientation may be crucial. According to Sherman (1967) once students get involved in the junior high school milieu their own social and physical maturation and the existing organizational structures and the rewards offered from these environments in which they live all influence them. If students are helped to focus on career development prior to becoming a part of this milieu, it could help them to build a kind of core attitude toward their personal future which might provide a slightly different perspective on the many other concerns of this age.

Bottoms and Matheny (1969) indicate that concern for career development cannot be a one-shot approach that takes place at the junior or senior high level. It is too late when the student reaches the point of making the transition from school to work. Career development should be conceived as a pyramid offering a broad base of exploratory experiences at the elementary and junior high school levels and gradually narrowing to a decision point as the student acquires appropriate preparation for his next step beyond school. Such a vocational development theme could serve as a common thread to unify the educational effort at all levels.

Purpose of the Study

In response to the need for a systematic, organized approach to career development, a research project was begun in March 1970 at Southern Illinois University in cooperation with the Illinois State Board of Vocational Education and Rehabilitation (Bailey, 1969). Entitled the Career

Development for Children Project the program is designed to involve children, beginning in elementary school, in experiences which will facilitate the ultimate goal of vocational maturity. The intermediate goal, at approximately the grade eight level, is to assist the student in formulating a tentative occupational preference. This will be accomplished through a series of carefully articulated developmental experiences beginning in grade one.

Assumptions

A primary assumption of the project is that career development is one aspect of the continuing and fluid processes of growth and learning. Maturing in a vocational sense involves coping with the developmental tasks of a given life stage, in part, through a series of integrated decisions.

Career development as a decision-making process is intimately linked with attempts to implement the self-concept. The second assumption states that an individual's occupational preference is an expression of his idea of the kind of person he is.

A third assumption is that the "quality" of a decision is determined by the type, amount, and validity of the various data entering the decision. All other things remaining constant, an increase in the accuracy and comprehensiveness of data about one's self and the world of work should correspondingly enhance career decision-making (Kroll, 1970).

The final assumption has profound implications for education. The knowledge, skills, attitudes and motivation

essential for career planning and decision-making can be fostered and developed. Presented simply, career development can and should be systematically influenced.

Definition of Terms

Considerable confusion results from misuse of the following words: career, occupation, vocation and job. The interrelation of these four terms can be schematically represented as follows:

Career > Occupation = Vocation > Job

This is to read "Career is greater than occupation, which is equal to vocation, which is greater than job." A career--a longitudinal, developmental concept--usually embraces more than a single occupation and certainly more than a single job. The succession of jobs within the sequence of occupations constitutes a career (Sinick, 1970).

Career development is conceived of as one aspect of general human development. It denotes the lifelong sequence and pattern of an individual's work-related behavior, including all work-relevant experiences and activities before and after entry into a formal occupation. Career development is a continual process of working out a synthesis or compromise between the self and the reality opportunities and limitations of the world of work (Kroll, 1970). The term vocational development is often used synonymously with career development.

The concept of vocational development leads logically to that of vocational maturity (Super, 1957). Vocational maturity is used to denote the degree of development, the place reached on the career development continuum. Vocational maturity may be thought of as vocational age, conceptually similar to mental age and may be described in terms of types of behavior, e.g., behavior manifested in coping with the developmental tasks of a given life stage.

The term occupational preference is used here to distinguish it from both occupational choice and occupational aspiration. Crites (1969) differentiates between the three on the basis of the extent to which reality is the basis for choosing. When an individual specifies an occupational preference, he considers what his possible future occupation will be, not his intention to enter a specific occupation (choice) or what his fantasy (aspiration) occupation might be. Super (1963) indicates that the formulation of a general occupational preference actually serves as the symbol of a number of related activities for which liking is indicated. The tentativeness of the preference is the indication that it is not a specific preference of the type which may prevail at a later stage. The behaviors in this area are largely verbal since the implementing of preferences is rare in the early and middle teens, although they may be instrumental, as when the pupil is active in the Future Teachers Association in high school.

An individual's self-concept includes three things: (1) the person's own intimate view of himself or his ego; (2) his perception of how others view him or his idea of his social self; (3) and his idea of the person he would like to be or his ideal self. Thus, self-concepts are composed not only of private inner thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and values, but also of experiences, expectations, attitudes, values and opinions derived from other people and their cultures (Barry and Wolfe, 1962).

Procedure

Following is a suggested outline for career development in grades one through eight. "The unfolding of an individual's career development beginning in early childhood is seen as relatively continuous and long term, but divided into stages or life periods for purposes of description and presentation" (Zaccaria, 1970). For each of the developmental stages there is assigned a Vocational Developmental Task which is: (1) appropriately synchronized in terms of a child's general development, and (2) is an essential element in career planning and decision-making. The concept of developmental stages and tasks comes from the principle that there are periods when an individual is ready for certain kinds of learning. If the task is introduced before or after the "teachable moment" efficiency in learning the task is significantly reduced. After a statement of the vocational developmental task, the Rationale explains why the goal task is appropriate.

AWARENESS STAGE: GRADES 1-3

Vocational Developmental Task:

Becoming aware of self and the world of work.

Rationale:

The interests of the child in early elementary school are largely centered around himself, his family, and his immediate environment. Since vocational maturity involves both knowledge of self and the world of work, the early grades of school can use the natural self-interest tendencies of the child to build a foundation of information about both areas. He can begin to learn about himself as a person distinct from other children in the class, defined in part by his environment--his unique family, his unique home. At the same time, he can be exposed to broad concepts about the world of work in the context of his self-centered world--occupational roles of members of his family, of workers who come to his home, of people who serve him. As the child explores home, school, and community, the importance and interdependence of workers can be stressed. Youngsters should also be helped to develop positive attitudes toward the world of work and the value of each individual's contribution. By increasing the awareness of self and the world of work, children begin to see a positive relationship between the two. Finally, it is central at this level to cause students to consider and evaluate their occupational "fantasy preferences." Such preferences can serve as a base of knowledge from which to develop more realistic attitudes and understanding.

ACCOMMODATION STAGE: GRADES 4-6

Vocational Developmental Task:

Relating growing knowledge of self and the world of work to the process of career development.

Rationale:

In the latter part of elementary school the child becomes increasingly responsive to the demands of his teachers and parents and pressures to perform well in school become acute. This stage appears right for introducing basic concepts of career development. Students should be made aware of the longitudinal, integrated, and dynamic nature of vocational behavior. Self appraisal, knowledge of the world of work, and perhaps school work as a whole, may become more meaningful as the student's attention is turned toward the future and his role in preparing for it. At this level the study and understanding of work roles are extended to include the concepts of job families and interest-area families. Self appraisal becomes more meaningful as individuals are caused to think about changes due to maturation and learning, and understand that certain self elements are related to various occupational roles. An attitude of "planfullness" should be promoted by assisting students in making decisions and outlining future actions. Concrete experience continues to be an important part of the program with much more responsibility attached to role playing and reality testing.

EXPLORATION STAGE: GRADES 7-8

Vocational Developmental Task:

Preparing to make an intelligent choice of career.

Rationale:

At the junior high school level, youth are faced with the necessity of making a choice of educational curriculum prior to entering high school. Confrontation with choice of curriculum and an understanding of the relationship between education and career results in an awareness of the need to plan for a future occupation. The ability to be more adept at one's career planning and occupational decision-making, however, is contingent upon being adequately prepared for the task. This stage is designed to provide students with a sound basis for making these important decisions. Occupational preparation reaches a more sophisticated level with study by all students of the economic and industrial systems by which goods and services are produced and distributed. A greater appreciation is gained of the economic and social value that different forms of work have in society. Means are provided to aid the student in studying a few selected occupational groups intensively. Exploration in school and extracurricular activities are increased as the individual tests hypotheses about himself and assumes many different occupational roles. Understanding and acceptance of significant data about self prompts him to compare and evaluate information discovered about workers

in the occupational areas he has studied. The ability to be more adept at one's career planning and vocational decision-making is manifested in the commitment and formulation of an educational-occupational plan based on sound information and selective use of resources.

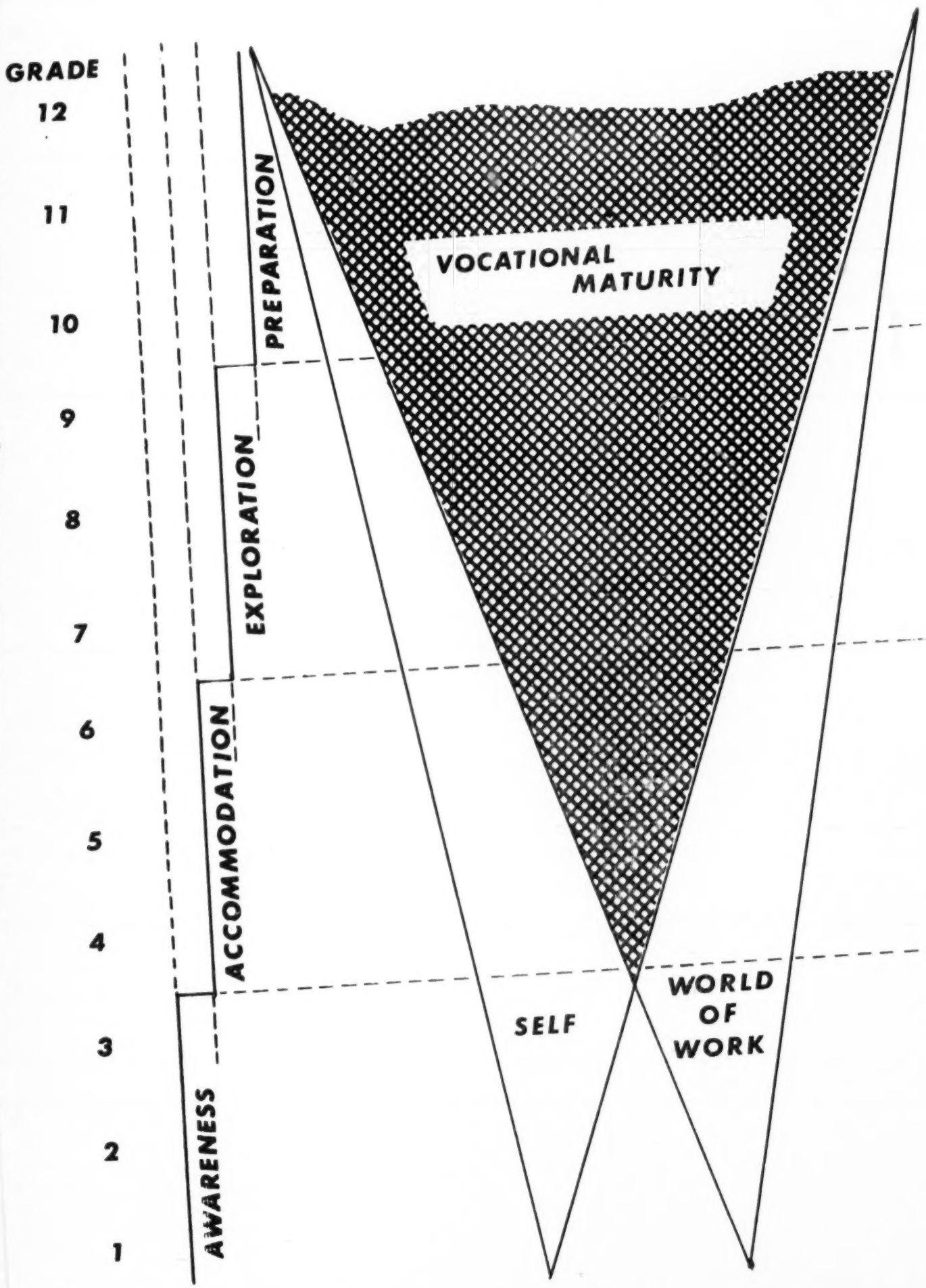
Method

The process of career development is shown graphically in Figure 1.* The formulation of a tentative occupational preference, at approximately the grade eight level, is characterized as a decision-making process which results from the application of knowledge and accumulated behavior regarding self and the world of work.

The specification of stages and vocational developmental tasks is important in identifying purpose and objectives for curriculum development. The Career Development for Children Project may be conceived as a program designed to help the individual achieve certain of his developmental tasks. A developmental task is midway between an individual need and a societal demand. It partakes of the nature of both (Havighurst, 1953). As such, it is a useful concept for relating vocational behavior to curriculum planning.

Each vocational developmental task may be described in terms of the behaviors which constitute the task. These behaviors are then translated into instructional outcomes which the student must master to successfully cope with each vocational developmental task. Following is an example of

*The scope of this project is limited to Grades 1-8.



CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

FIG. NO. 1

how the vocational developmental task for the Awareness Stage is delineated into instructional objectives.

AWARENESS STAGE:

General Objective:

A. Understands that activity is stimulated by purpose.

Rationale:

As a starting point for learning about self and the broad world of work the child needs to be aware that day to day activities are purposeful and should be able to identify some of the reasons for human activity.

Specific Objectives:

1. Identifies (lists?) own activities throughout a day

    1.1. Identifies those activities he "has to do"

    1.2. Of activities he "has to do", identifies some that he would do even if he didn't "have to"

    1.3. Identifies general likes and dislikes from daily activities

    1.4. Compares own likes, dislikes and "has to's" with those of other children in group

2. Develops broad definitions of work and play

    2.1. Becomes aware of reasons why people work and play

    2.2. Recognizes both commonalities and differences between work and play

    2.3. Identifies some characteristics of work and play in terms of mental and physical attributes, when and where it is performed, etc.

3. Discusses activities of self and others in terms of broad work-play classifications

    3.1. Identifies own activites as work or play

    3.2. Relates work and play classification to things he likes to do, things he has to do

3.3. Considers work and play activities of others in terms of things they like to do and have to do

Implementing the Curriculum Model

The curriculum design embodied in the Career Development for Children Project views the individual from a developmental perspective. Each person is seen progressing through a number of vocational life stages, each involving specific demands and requirements. Career choice is regarded not as a specific event, but rather a process which emerges over time as the individual pursues career related goals (Zaccaria, 1970). Basically, the individual does not choose an occupation, but rather makes a series of occupational and occupationally-related choices at different life stages which, when taken cumulatively, result in vocational development rather than an occupational choice, per se.

Within this generalized developmental framework the project borrows heavily from self-concept theories of career development. Viewed from this perspective, the self is regarded as a learned attribute progressing from birth and differentiating steadily through childhood, adolescence, and beyond like an unfolding spiral (Kroll, 1970). Career development and the more limited aspect of formulating an occupational choice is conceptualized as the process of implementing a self-concept. In expressing an occupational preference a person is putting into occupational terminology his idea of the kind of person he is (Super, 1963).

The implication for practice, of these points of view, should be obvious. Assuming that career development involves a sequence of decision in which the individual seeks to implement a self-concept, the purpose of curriculum, then, must be to enhance decision-making skills and foster self-concept development. Practitioners should not help people only at the more identifiable "choice points," but also during the periods leading up to the choice points (Zaccaria, 1970).

The operationalization of self-concept development may be outlined in Figure 2. Donald Super has consistently described career development as the formation and implementation of a self-concept in the context of the world of work. According to Super (1963) the concept of self evolves through the processes of FORMATION, TRANSLATION, and IMPLEMENTATION.

In infancy the individual begins the first process of forming a concept of himself, developing a sense of identity as a person distinct from but at the same time resembling other persons. Exploration appears to be the first phase of FORMATION and a continuing process. Just as the infant plays with his toes, or holds his hand in front of his face to observe the movements of his fingers, so the adolescent tries his hand at writing poetry, or admires the skill revealed by the masterpiece he has produced in the studio. The self is an object of exploration as it develops and changes. Self differentiation is a second phase in the development of the self-concept. The small boy, son of his father, is aware of the fact that he is smaller, weaker, a

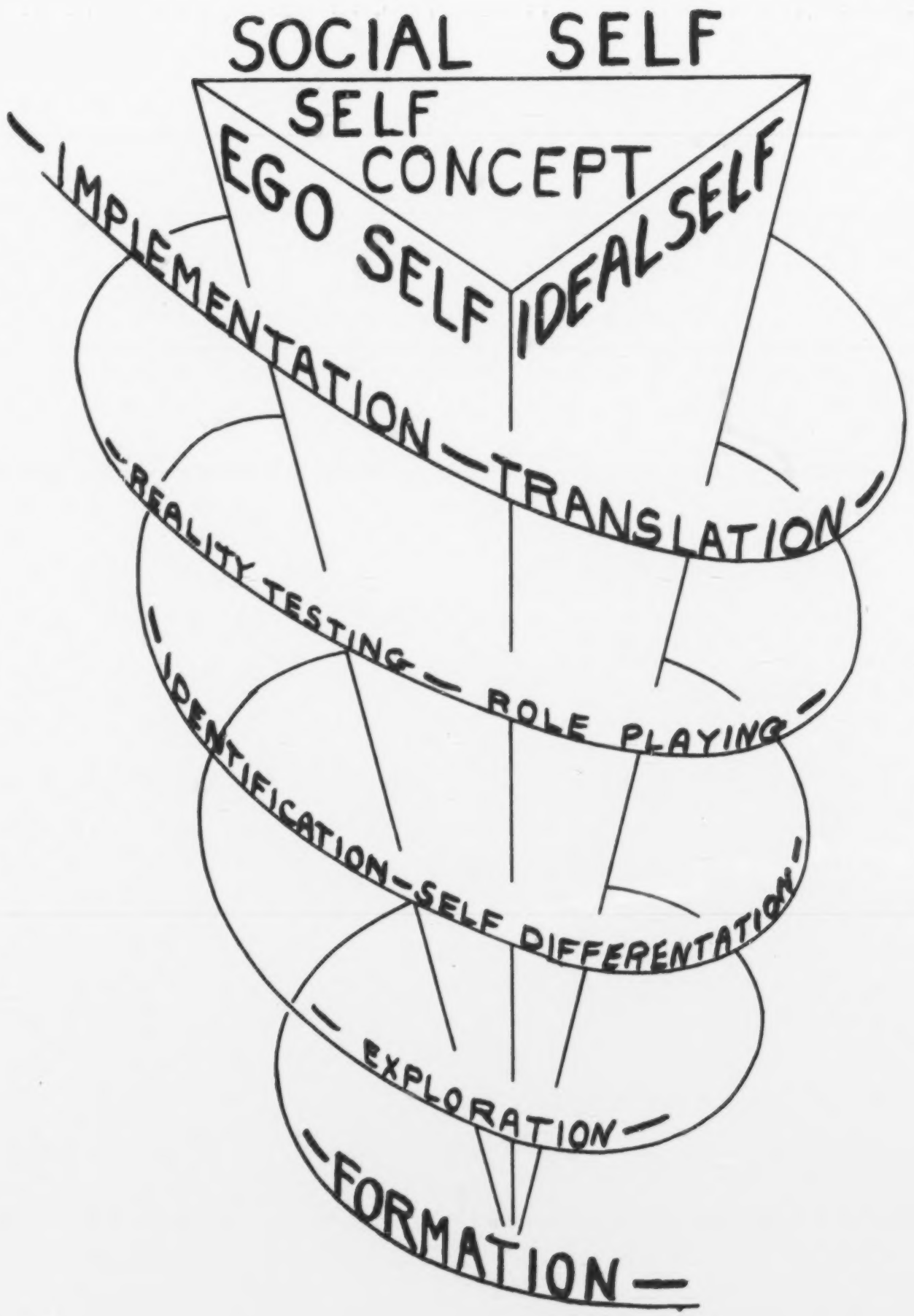

SOCIAL SELF
SELF CONCEPT
EGO SELF
IDEAL SELF
IMPLEMENTATION
TRANSLATION
REALITY TESTING
ROLE PLAYING
IDENTIFICATION
SELF DIFFERENTATION
EXPLORATION
FORMATION

FIG. NO. 2

milk drinker but not a coffee drinker, and so forth. These are the beginnings of self differentiation. Identification is another process which goes on more or less simultaneously with differentiation. The boy-child, aware of similarities between himself and his mother, aware and also envious of his father's strength and power, identifies with his father and strives in various ways to be like him. This is less true of the girl-child, whose adult counterparts more often work at home or, if they go to work, tend to talk about it less than the man and seem less involved in their occupation. Children are channeled along occupational lines to the degree that they can identify with realistic role models. Role playing is a type of behavior which accompanies or follows identification. The small boy who identifies with his father seeks to emulate him: in his imagination or in his overt behavior the boy acts as he thinks his father does, later he bats left-handed because the baseball player with whom he now identifies is left-handed. Whether the role playing is largely imaginative or overtly participatory it gives some opportunity to try the role on for size, to see how valid the concept of oneself actually is. Reality testing stems as readily from role playing as role playing does from identification. Life offers many opportunities for reality testing, in the form of children's play, in school courses, in extracurricular activities, and in part-time or temporary employment. These reality testing experiences strengthen or modify self concepts, and confirm or contradict the way in which they have been tentatively translated into occupational roles.

The TRANSLATION of self-concept into occupational terms is theorized by Super to proceed in several ways. (1) Identification with an adult sometimes leads to a desire to play his occupational role. (2) Experience in a role in which one is cast may lead to the discovery of a vocational translation of one's self concepts. (3) Awareness of the fact that one has attributes which are said to be important in a certain field of work may lead one to look into that occupation; and the investigation may lead to the confirmation of the idea that the role expectations of that occupation are such that one would do well in it and enjoy it.

The IMPLEMENTATION of self concepts is the result of these processes as professional training is entered or as education is completed and the young man or woman moves from school or college into the world of work. In an early phase, the premedical student enters medical school, proud of his developing sense of professional identity. In a later phase, the young engineering graduate gets his first job as an engineer, and rejoices in his new title, symbol of his having converted a self concept into a reality. At the other extreme, the high school drop-out who never did well in his studies, who was never accepted by his classmates, and who is fired from the job that he finally got only after a number of rejections, finds the occupational translation of his self concept as "failure" confirmed and implemented. It is important that positive conceptions of self be developed prior and during the translation into occupational roles. After a series

of negative experiences, it takes a great deal of re-education to help develop more positive self concepts.

Theories related to self concept formation, and related research, support the existence of multiple dimensions of self. The representation in Figure 2 of three aspects of self has been borrowed from Barry and Wolfe (1962) to illustrate that an individual's self concept includes the person's own view of himself; his perception of how others view him; and his idea of the person that he would like to be. These three phases of self-concept coalesce to form an individual's total picture of himself: a picture that influences the person in all his actions, thoughts and feelings. A curriculum designed to facilitate career development, then, must also provide experiences and activities which allow students opportunities to formulate, translate, and implement these three aspects of self. Although the processes of self concept formation and the relationship among dimensions of self outlined here, remains to be demonstrated, the utility of this approach for the curriculum specialist is to convey the notion that concepts of self can be meaningfully described and orderly persented. Curriculum development, field testing, and evaluation must follow to assess the validity of these formulations.

Summary

Career development programs initiated at the elementary school level must be systematically organized, the core of which is a sound conceptual model. The curricular design for the Career Development for Children Project is based on a

systems approach which clearly states purpose and objectives. Content related to the world of work is selected for its ability to achieve the stated behavioral outcomes. The instructional processes are specifically structured to take into consideration the three dimensions of self and the nature of self-concept formation.

A series of well-planned activities such as gaming and simulation, role playing, group projects, vocational exploratory experiences, etc. will be implemented to assist students in coping with the demands of each vocational developmental task. Specifically designed and articulated activities will help to provide children and youth with a realistic understanding of self and the world of work, which can be translated into the intermediate goal of formulating an occupational preference and the ultimate goal of vocational maturity. Career programs thus conceived have the potential for providing a core of experiences around which all future educational and occupational goals revolve.

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